

The Collaborative for STEM Education and Outreach (CSEO) at Vanderbilt University calls for an end to the racism that has been plaguing this nation since before its founding. The recent murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery along with countless others, are but the most recent, brutal examples of a country and a justice system that have failed to live up to the founding principles that all people are created equal and have unalienable rights to “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” We continue as a society to confront the struggle between these opposing forces; this is an ongoing process that we must face head on. Through mass incarceration, unfair sentencing practices, and much higher rates of lethal force by law enforcement for nonviolent crimes, the US criminal justice system has devalued Black lives. At the same time, systemic racism and unconscious biases in all of our institutions, including education, have limited opportunities and resources for Black scholars of all ages. This must end.

The CSEO stands in solidarity with our team members, families, students, parents, and community in ending all forms of racism and inequity and in working toward justice for all.

The CSEO recognizes the pervasive racism that persists not only in our communities but in STEM and academia. Historical examples such as the [Tuskegee Experiment](#), [Henrietta Lacks](#), [Anarcha Westcott](#) and other Black bodies abused in the name of science are proof that Black lives have not always mattered to STEM. We stand for the pursuit of equity and justice for Black lives.

We have begun the work of identifying and taking specific actions to improve our efforts and we will share these actions, as well as our progress as we work toward them, on a new page on our website dedicated to diversity and equity.

We hope that by making our position known, our students and families will feel supported and seen.

Sincerely,

The Collaborative for STEM Education and Outreach

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